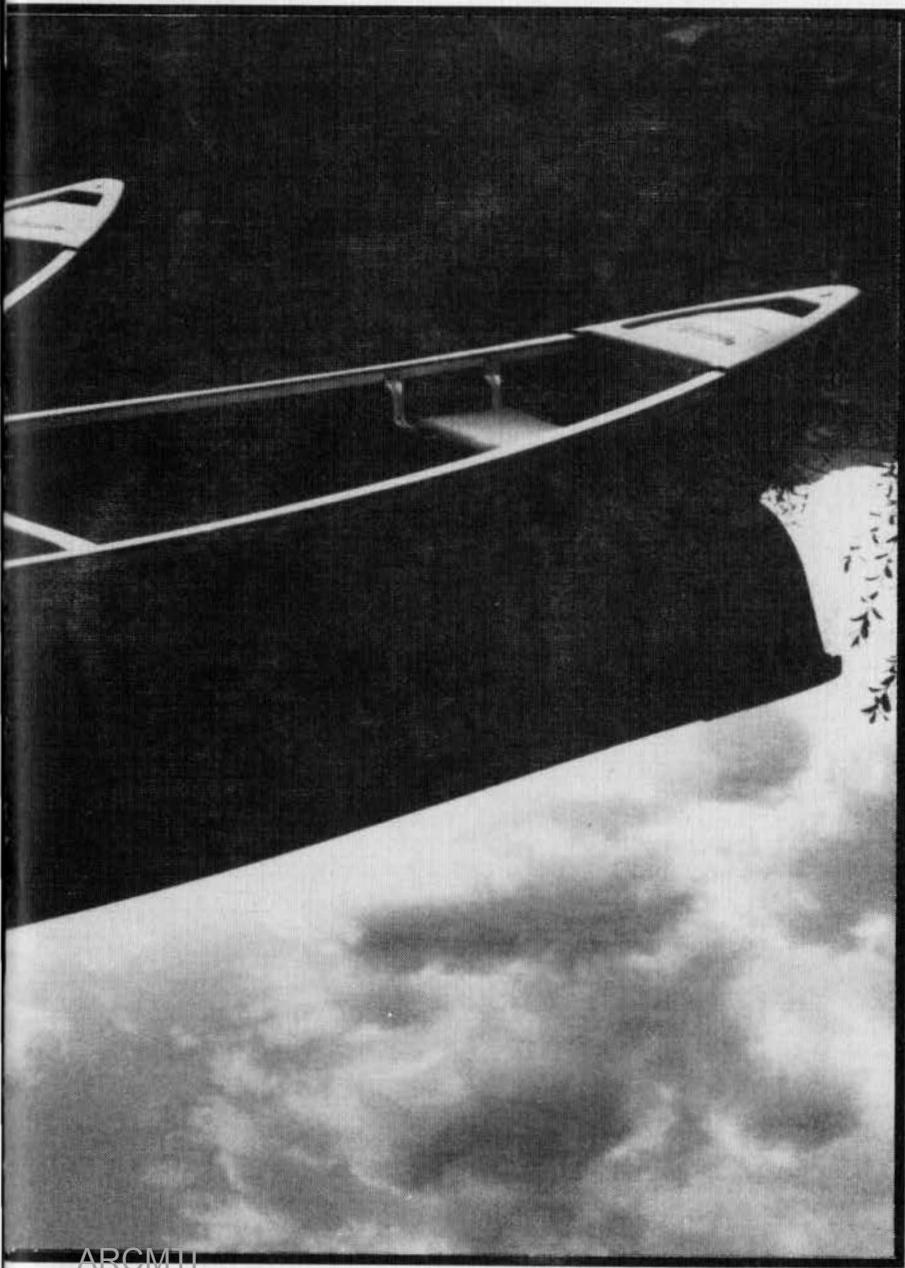


September 1994, Vol. 1, No. 6

\$3.25

# I N D E X

*The Montreal Literary Calendar*



POETRY BY

Cynthia Sugars  
Bruce Taylor

PROSE BY

James  
Boothroyd

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## INDEX

September 1994

Dear Readers,

Well, that spectacular, spontaneous, fly-by-the-seat-of-our-pants event crashed. Or rather never got off the ground. A few daunting technical difficulties, coupled with the fact that the summer weather has a tendency to make some of us a little *too* languid, resulted in a total organizational standstill. We're actually quite disappointed in ourselves, and apologize to everyone who expected a literary B-B-Q and waited for it.

INDEX, though, continues with great poetry and fiction, as well as our usually comprehensive listings. In fact, it looks like it's going to be a very busy fall. More reason than ever to buy this magazine (for any of you who are still standing in that crowded bookstore, holding this issue lightly in your hand, deciding), or buy a subscription (now even cheaper at \$30 a year).

Our own reading series resumes in October with a visit by the internationally acclaimed Arabic poet Mohammed Al-Mahut, although we do hope to see you all at the AEAQ, FEWQ, and QSPELL open house on September 21 at the Atwater library.

Until then, keep reading.

Sincerely,

The Editors

# INDEX

*Publisher &  
Managing Editor*  
Stephanie Blanshay

*Prose Editor*  
Denise Roig

*Poetry Editor*  
Carmine Starnino

*Designer &  
Editorial Assistant*  
Sara Johnston

*Special Thanks to:  
oh, just about  
everyone.*

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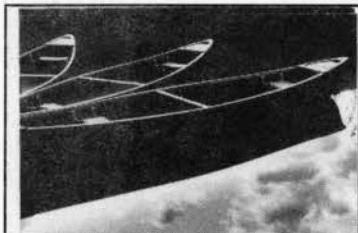
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Photographer Nicole Khoury is a student at Dawson's Institute of Photography. For more information, please call 624-4600.

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# I N D E X

*The Montreal Literary Calendar*

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Founded in 1994/Vol.1, No.6  
September 1994

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## Contributor's Notes

Vancouver-born James Boothroyd is working on a collection of short fiction called *Unlikely Events*. In 1993 he won *Matrix* magazine's New Voices in Quebec writing competition for "Bird Fever," a short story. He works as a freelance journalist in Montreal.

\*\*\*

Bruce Taylor's publications include a chapbook, *Getting on with the Era* (Villeneuve, 1987), and *Cold Rubber Feet* (Cormorant, 1989). In 1990 he shared the QSPELL award for poetry with Erin Mouré.

\*\*\*

Cynthia Sugars is a PhD candidate in the English department at McGill University. She has had poetry published in several literary journals, most recently *Contemporary Verse II*. In 1992 she was a prize-winner in the Mona Adileman poetry competition.

\*\*\*

Michael Harris is the editor of the Signal Editions poetry series (an imprint of Véhicule Press). His most recent publication is *New and Selected Poems* (Véhicule Press, 1992). He is currently working on a novel

## Listings

### READINGS

Monday, September 5

- 8:00pm      **JOHN ALEXANDER**, *funky jazz eatery*, presents **Literary Readings** every Monday night. The readings will take place at the bar/restaurant, 2065 Bishop. For more information, please call 289-1889.

Monday, September 12

- 1:30pm      **Culturama** presents a reading and commentary by **Carol Shields**, author of *The Stone Diaries*, and her daughter **Sara Shields**, winner of the Nova Scotia Federation Writers Poetry Prize. The reading is part of Culturama's fall programme which is a tribute to women who forge our cultural identity. The reading will take place at the Museum of Fine Arts Cummings Auditorium, 1379 Sherbrooke West (street level entrance). Admission is \$5 (tax incl.). For reservations and more information, please call 937-7937.

- 8:00pm      **JOHN ALEXANDER**, *funky jazz eatery*, presents **Literary Readings** every Monday night. The readings will take place at the bar/restaurant, 2065 Bishop. For more information, please call 289-1889.

Tuesday, September 13

- 5:30pm      **Dawson College** presents a poetry reading by **Julie Bruck**, author of *The Woman Downstairs*. The reading will take place at Dawson College, 3040 Sherbrooke W., in The Amphitheatre,

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room 4C.1 . Admission is free. For more information, please call 931-8731 ext. 1359.

8:00pm

**The Moveable Feast Writer's Workshop** presents the third in its series of poetry and prose readings, as well as the launch of a Moveable Feast chapbook. The featured readers include **Eugene Abrams, Victoria Stanton, Eben Illingworth, Joyce Abrams, Richey Rea, Lynn Suderman, Francesca Gesualdi, David Clark, Rick Waldau** and **Scott Inniss**. **Amy Barratt** will be guest M.C. for the evening. There will be an open mike following the reading. The readings will take place at Bistro 4, 4040 St. Laurent (corner Duluth). Admission is free. For more information, please call 289-9795.

Friday, September 16

6:00pm

The **Anti-Poverty Group** presents a poetry reading by New Life Poets **Phillip Amsel, Peter Bailey, Mark Dean, Robert Smith** and **Terry Leckner**. The reading will take place at 6525 Somerled, Suite 7 (corner Cavendish). Admission is free but donations are accepted. For more information, please call 489-3548.

Sunday, September 18

10:00am

**The Gazette** and **Paragraphe Bookstore & Café** present the first of **Books & Breakfast**, with readings, signings and a chance to meet the authors of recently released books, as well as an elegant full-course breakfast. This Breakfast features **Mordecai Richler**, author of *This Year in Jerusalem*, **Ken Radu**, author of *Snow over Judaea*, and **Shyam Selvadurai**, author of *Funny Boy*. The event will take place in the Oval Room at the Ritz-Carlton Hotel, 1228 Sherbrooke St. W.. Seating is limited, so buy your tickets in advance at Paragraphe or at The Gazette. Admission is \$20 (plus GST), which includes a full-course breakfast, or \$75 (plus GST) for all four Breakfasts in the series. For more information, please call Richard King at 845-5811, or Reena Santini at 987-2509.

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Monday, September 19

8:00pm

**JOHN ALEXANDER**, *funky jazz eatery*, presents **Literary**

**Readings** every Monday night. The readings will take place at the bar/restaurant, 2065 Bishop. For more information, please call 289-1889.

9:00pm

**The Urban Wanderers Reading Series** kicks off its fall edition with **Solo Flight: Dramatic Monologues**, with readings by **Marianne Ackerman, Harry Standjofski, Robert Astel** and **Ann Lambert**. Proceeds from the series go to ReCLAIM, the Reading Council for Literacy Advance in Montreal. The reading will take place at Bistro 4, 4040 St. Laurent (corner Duluth). Admission is free. For more information, please call 484-3186.

Monday, September 26

8:00pm

**JOHN ALEXANDER**, *funky jazz eatery*, presents **Literary**

**Readings** every Monday night. The readings will take place at the bar/restaurant, 2065 Bishop. For more information, please call 289-1889.

9:00pm

**The Urban Wanderers Reading Series** present **4 x 4: This Year's Model**, with **Joe Fiorito, Ray Beauchemin, Joel Yanofsky** and **Gordon Graham**. The reading will take place at Bistro 4, 4040 St. Laurent. Admission is free. For more information, please call 484-3186.

Wednesday, September 28

7:30pm

**The Double Hook Book Shop** presents a poetry reading by

**Anthony Berman**. The reading will take place at the Double Hook, 1235A Greene Avenue. Admission is free. For more information, please call 932-5093.

# The Urban Wanderers Reading Series Fall 1994 edition

## **Solo Flight: Dramatic Monologues**

Sept. 19

Marianne Ackerman, Robert Astel, Jennifer Clark, Ann Lambert  
and Harry Standjofski

## **4X4: This Year's Model**

Sept. 26

Joe Fiorito, Gordon Graham, Raymond Beauchemin, Joel Yanofsky

## **Day Trips: 24-hour-old Fiction**

Oct. 3

James Boothroyd, Pat Webster, Denise Roig and David Helwig

## **Moved by the Muse: An Evening in the Muses' Company**

Oct. 17

Endre Farkas, Ruth Taylor, Katharine Beeman and Ian Stephens

## **From Distant Shores: Adopting Canada as Home**

Oct. 24

Yeshim Ternar, Camie Kim and Elias Letelier-Ruz

## **Ghost Walk: Stories That Go Bump in the Night**

Oct. 31

Anne Dandurand, Ann Diamond, Robert Majzels, Vittorio Rossi  
and P. Scott Lawrence

## **The Road Less Travelled: Gay and Lesbian Writers**

Nov. 7

Amy Barrett, Will Aitken and Erin Mouré

## **Poetry in Motion: Performance Poetry**

Nov. 14

Jill Battson, Corey Frost and La Groupe Poesie Moderne

## **From There to Here: Literature in Translation, Haiti in Transition**

An evening with Dany Laferrière and special guest David Homel

Nov. 21

All readings 9 p.m.

**Bistro 4, 4040 St. Laurent Blvd.**

To benefit RECLAIM

Reading Council for Literacy Advance in Montreal

*For information, call 484-3186*

ARCMTL

## LAUNCHES

Wednesday, September 7

6:00pm

**The Double Hook Book Shop** presents the launch of **Charles Foran's Kitchen Music** (published by Cormorant). The launch will take place at the Double Hook, 1235A Greene Avenue. Admission is free. For more information, please call 932-5093.

## LECTURES

Tuesday, September 27

7:45pm

**The St. James Literary Society** presents **Dr. Maurice Bricault**, PhD, speaking about his illustrated book, *Sacred Heritage*. The lecture will take place at McGill University's Faculty Club, 3450 McTavish. The annual membership fee to the Literary Society is \$35 for individuals, \$50 for families. For more information, please call Allan Raymond at 489-8741.

Thursday, September 29

8:00pm

**The Friends of the Library** present a lecture by **Dr. Victor C. Goldbloom**, Commissioner of Official Languages. Dr. Goldbloom will be speaking on "Hugh MacLennan's *Two Solitudes - Today*." The lecture takes place in room 232 of McGill University's Leacock building, on the corner of McTavish and Dr. Penfield. Admission is free. For more information, please call 398-8224.

## BOOK CLUBS

Tuesday, September 13

7:15pm

**The Pierrefonds/Dollard-des-Ormeaux Intermunicipal Library** invites you to come and share your love of books in a friendly and relaxed environment at their monthly **Literary Rendez-Vous**. This month the club will be discussing **Nadine Gordimer's** *The Conservationist*. The meeting will take place at the Dollard Library, 12001 De Salaberry Blvd. New members are always welcome, but must either be a resident of DDO or Pierrefonds, or pay a \$50/year non-residents fee. For information and registration, please call Jerrolyn Campbell at 684-1496.

Wednesday, September 21

1:00pm

**The Pointe Claire Library** invites you to join their **Book Discussion Club**, which meets the third Wednesday of every month at the Library, 100 Douglas Shand. The deadline for registration is September 16. For more information, please call 630-1218.

8:00pm

**The Montreal Book Discussion Group** invites you to come and join them for serious and lighthearted discussions of the great contemporary and classic works. The group is also planning to start some new discussion subgroups on the topics of Shakespeare, the Bible and the Neo-Freudians. The venue and the book to be discussed at the next meeting are still TBA, but for more information, please call Marco at 735-0744.

## MISCELLANEOUS

Thursday, September 1 to  
Friday, September 30

**The Friends of the Library** present an exhibit on **Karen Blixen** — alias **Isak Dinesen** — the renowned Danish author of *Out of Africa*, *Seven Gothic Tales* and *Babette's Feast*. The exhibition takes place in the McLennan Library Lobby, 3459 McTavish, Mondays to Thursdays 9:00am to 8:45pm, Fridays 9:00am to 5:45pm and Saturdays 10:00am to 5:45pm. Admission is free, and tours are offered on request. For more information, please call 398-8224.

Friday, September 9 to  
Friday, November 28  
1:30pm

**The Pointe Claire Library** presents a creative writing workshop/seminar, "**Write Your Story**," with teacher Sally Mackey. The 12-week programme takes place every Friday from 1:30pm to 3:30pm at the Pointe Claire Library, 100 Douglas Shand. There is no fee for the programme, but please register soon. Everyone is welcome, and there is a special invitation to seniors. For more information, please call 630-1218.

Wednesday, September 21  
6:00pm

**The AEAQ, FEWQ and QSPELL** are holding an **open house** at their new offices in the Atwater Library. In collaboration with the Atwater Library, they will be presenting an evening of special events, including the AEAQ's launching of *Lasting Impressions : A Short History of English-Language Publishing in Quebec*, the presentation of the upcoming Writers-in-Schools programme sponsored by the FEWQ, and the announcement of the 1994 QSPELL

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Awards finalists. The Atwater Library is located at 1200 Atwater, second floor. Admission is free. For more information, please call Andrea at FEWQ 934-2485.

Tuesday, September 27

- 7:30pm **FEAC**, the Freelance Editors Association of Canada, presents its general meeting for members and non-members alike. The guest speaker will be **Robert Lecker**, publisher of ECW Press, speaking on "*Editors and Editing: A Publisher's Perspective.*" The meeting takes place at the Atwater Library in the Auditorium, 1200 Atwater. Admission is \$4.00 for members, \$10.00 for non-members. For more information, please call 842-3011.

Thursday, September 29

- 7:00pm **The Pointe Claire Library** presents a reading programme for parents and children aged 4-15 called **Kumon Reading English**. The programme takes place at the Library, 100 Douglas Shand. Admission is free, but you must be registered. For more information, please call 630-1218.

## RADIO & TELEVISION

Monday, August 29 to

Friday, September 2

- 10:15pm The CBC programme "**Between the Covers**" presents **Betty Lee Bonner Lives There**, by **Lois Simmie**. In her new collection of stories, Ms. Simmie serves up a delightful gathering of lighthearted and poignant stories about prairie lives. Here, the ordinary turns outrageous — and God hangs out at the A&W. Produced in Calgary by Kathleen Flaherty. The programme airs nightly, Monday to Friday, on **CBC 940AM**.



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Thursday, September 1

1:00pm **WSLO Malone**, North Country Public Radio, presents “**New Letters on the Air**” featuring poets and writers reading from their work. The programme airs on **90.9FM**.

Friday, September 2

6:00pm **CKUT** presents “**Literature Montreal**,” with host **Richard Weintrager** speaking with literary figures from Montreal and across Canada. The programme airs on **CKUT 90.3FM**.

Saturday, September 3

9:30am **Stanley Asher** reviews Books on Pop Culture. This week he reviews *Sunday's Children*, a novel by Ingmar Bergman; *Only Words*, by Catherine A. MacKinnon and *The Next Parish Over*, a collection of Irish-American writing, edited by Patricia Monaghan. The programme airs on **CINQ-FM 102.3FM**.

11:00am **WSLO Malone**, North Country Public Radio, presents “**Selected Shorts**,” an hour of classic and contemporary stories. The programme airs on **90.9FM**.

5:08pm **Shelley Pomerance** hosts “**Saturday Spotlight**,” CBC Radio’s weekly programme on the arts in Quebec, with reviews and interviews, issues and opinions, and good music, too! The programme airs on **CBC 940AM**.

Sunday, September 4

7:08pm CBC Radio AM presents “**The Best of Writers and Company**,” the CBC Stereo programme hosted by **Eleanor Wachtel**. This rebroadcast features English fiction writer **Rose Tremain**. The programme airs on **CBC Radio 940AM**.

Monday, September 5 to

Friday, September 30

10:15pm The CBC programme “**Between the Covers**” presents *The Shipping News* by **E. Annie Proulx**. Set in Newfoundland, this stunning new American novel won both the Pulitzer Prize

## I N D E X

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and the National Book Award. A funny, unflinching portrait of outport life in the 1990s, the book stars Quoyle, a great loaf of a man who works for a wildly bad newspaper. Read by Janis Spence and produced in Halifax by Paula Danckert, the programme will air nightly from Monday to Friday on **CBC 940AM**.

Monday, September 5

12:30pm           **WCFE** presents a new interview series called "**Malone**," which features author/journalist **Michael S. Malone** speaking with figures from all aspects of American life. The programme airs on **Channel 57** (Ch. 27 on CF Cable, Ch. 14 on Videotron).

Tuesday, September 6

7:00pm           **Stanley Asher** reviews Books on Jewish Themes. This week he reviews *The Revenge of God : The Resurgence of Islam, Christianity and Judaism in the Modern World*, by Gilles Kepel and *The Death of the Messiah (2 volumes)*, by Raymond E. Brown. The programme airs on **CKUT 90.3FM**.

Thursday, September 8

1:00pm           **WSLO Malone**, North Country Public Radio, presents "**New Letters on the Air**" featuring poets and writers reading from their work. The programme airs on **90.9FM**.

9:00pm           **WCFE** presents the winning play from the Local High School Playwrights Contest. The play, entitled *The Ride Home* by **Kherine Wiley**, is being performed by the Pendragon Theatre of Saranac Lake. The programme airs on **Channel 57** (Ch. 27 on CF Cable, Ch. 14 on Videotron).

Friday, September 9

6:00pm           **CKUT** presents "**Literature Montreal**," with host **Richard Weintrager** speaking with literary figures from Montreal and across Canada. The programme airs on **CKUT 90.3FM**.

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Saturday, September 10

9:30am

**Stanley Asher** reviews Books on Pop Culture. This week he reviews *From Mammy to Miss America and Beyond : Cultural Images and the Shaping of U.S. Social Policy*, by K. Sue Jewell; *Body and Soul*, a play by John Mighton and *The Best Intentions*, a novel by Ingmar Bergman. The programme airs on **CINQ-FM 102.3FM**.

11:00am

**WSLO Malone**, North Country Public Radio, presents “**Selected Shorts**,” an hour of classic and contemporary stories. The programme airs on **90.9FM**.

2:00pm

**WCFE** presents **Ireland: A Writers Island**, a special documentary which looks at great Irish writers and their places in history. The programme airs on **Channel 57** (Ch. 27 on CF Cable, Ch. 14 on Videotron).

5:08pm

**Shelley Pomerance** hosts “**Saturday Spotlight**,” CBC Radio’s weekly programme on the arts in Quebec, with reviews and interviews, issues and opinions, and good music, too! The programme airs on **CBC 940AM**.

Sunday, September 11

3:00pm

The CBC Stereo programme “**Writers & Company**” presents host **Eleanor Wachtel** in a one-hour interview with **Gore Vidal**. The programme airs on **CBC Stereo 93.5 FM**.

Monday, September 12

12:30pm

**WCFE** presents a new interview series called “**Malone**,” which features author/journalist **Michael S. Malone** speaking with figures from all aspects of American life. The programme airs on **Channel 57** (Ch. 27 on CF Cable, Ch. 14 on Videotron).

Tuesday, September 13

7:00pm

**Stanley Asher** reviews Books on Jewish Themes. This week he reviews *Strangers Always: A Jewish Family in Wartime Shanghai*, by Rena Krasno; *Dancing at the Club Holocaust: Stories New and*

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*Selected*, by J.J. Steinfeld and *Shanghai Refuge: A Memoir of the World War II Jewish Ghetto*, by Ernest G. Heppner. The programme airs on **CKUT 90.3FM**.

Wednesday, September 14

8:00pm           **WCFE** presents the premier of **Seasons of a Poet: The Life of Jeanne Robert Foster**, a documentary about the life of the nineteenth-century feminist poet. The programme airs on **Channel 57** (Ch. 27 on CF Cable, Ch. 14 on Videotron).

Thursday, September 15

1:00pm           **WSLO Malone**, North Country Public Radio, presents “**New Letters on the Air**” featuring poets and writers reading from their work. The programme airs on **90.9FM**.

Friday, September 16

6:00pm           **CKUT** presents “**Literature Montreal**,” with host **Richard Weintrager** speaking with literary figures from Montreal and across Canada. The programme airs on **CKUT 90.3FM**.

Saturday, September 17

9:30am           **Stanley Asher** reviews Books on Pop Culture Themes. This week he reviews *The Electronic Eye: The Rise of Surveillance Society*, by David Lyon; *13 Uncollected Stories*, by John Cheever and *Wishing on the Moon: The Life and Times of Billie Holiday*, by Donald Clarke. The programme airs on **CINQ-FM 102.3FM**.

11:00am          **WSLO Malone**, North Country Public Radio, presents “**Selected Shorts**,” an hour of classic and contemporary stories. The programme airs on **90.9FM**.

5:08pm           **Shelley Pomerance** hosts “**Saturday Spotlight**,” CBC Radio’s weekly programme on the arts in Quebec, with reviews and interviews, issues and opinions, and good music, too! The programme airs on **CBC 940AM**.

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- Sunday, September 18
- 3:00pm      The CBC Stereo programme "**Writers & Company**" presents host **Eleanor Wachtel** talking with **Beryl Bainbridge**. The programme airs on **CBC Stereo 93.5 FM**.
- Monday, September 19
- 12:30pm      **WCFE** presents a new interview series called "**Malone**," which features author/journalist **Michael S. Malone** speaking with figures from all aspects of American life. The programme airs on **Channel 57** (Ch. 27 on CF Cable, Ch. 14 on Videotron).
- 9:45pm      **CJAD** presents "**Book Banter**," with host **Stuart Nulman**. This week he reviews *Debt of Honour*, by Tom Clancy and *Back to the Batcave*, by Adam West. He also examines the American and Canadian bestseller lists, and discusses the latest news in the publishing industry. The programme airs on **CJAD 800AM**.
- 

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Tuesday, September 20

- 7:00pm **Stanley Asher** reviews books on Jewish Themes. This week he reviews *Sandcastles: The Arabs in Search of the Modern World*, by Milton Viorst; *Lillian Kaplun's Kitchen and The Visual Dimension: Aspects of Jewish Art*, edited by Clare Moore. The programme airs on **CKUT 90.3FM**.

Thursday, September 22

- 1:00pm **WSLO Malone**, North Country Public Radio, presents “**New Letters on the Air**” featuring poets and writers reading from their work. The programme airs on **90.9FM**.

Friday, September 23

- 6:00pm **CKUT** presents “**Literature Montreal**,” with host **Richard Weintrager** speaking with literary figures from Montreal and across Canada. The programme airs on **CKUT 90.3FM**.

Saturday, September 24

- 9:30am **Stanley Asher** reviews Books on Pop Culture. This week he reviews *On Writers and Writing*, by John Gardner; *Villain Elle*, by Lynn Crosby and *Zephyr: Tracking a Dream Across America*, by Henry Kisor. The programme airs on **CINQ-FM 102.3FM**.

11:00am

- WSLO Malone**, North Country Public Radio, presents “**Selected Shorts**,” an hour of classic and contemporary stories. The programme airs on **90.9FM**.

5:08pm

- Shelley Pomerance** hosts “**Saturday Spotlight**,” CBC Radio’s weekly programme on the arts in Quebec, with reviews and interviews, issues and opinions, and good music, too! The programme airs on **CBC 940AM**.

Sunday, September 25

- 3:00pm The CBC Stereo programme “**Writers & Company**” presents host **Eleanor Wachtel** talking with literary figures from all over the world. The programme airs on **CBC 940AM**.

## I N D E X

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Monday, September 26

- 12:30pm      **WCFE** presents a new interview series called “**Malone**,” which features author/journalist **Michael S. Malone** speaking with figures from all aspects of American life. The programme airs on **Channel 57** (Ch. 27 on CF Cable, Ch. 14 on Videotron).
- 8:00pm      **CJAD** presents a special 2 hour “**Book Banter**,” with host **Stuart Nulman**. This show will be a “Fire Sale,” with interviews and reviews, authors and titles TBA. The programme airs on **CJAD 800AM**.

Tuesday, September 27

- 7:00pm      **Stanley Asher** reviews books on Jewish Themes. This week he reviews *American Heritage Haggadah; Simply Kosher*, by Ramona Bachmann and *Israel's Best Defence: The First Full Story of the Israeli Air Force*, by Col. Eliezer “Cheetah” Cohen. The programme airs on **CKUT 90.3FM**.

Thursday, September 29

- 1:00pm      **WSLO Malone**, North Country Public Radio, presents “**New Letters on the Air**” featuring poets and writers reading from their work. The programme airs on **90.9FM**.

Friday, September 30

- 11:00am      **WCFE** presents the beginning of **Joseph Campbell’s Transformations of Myth Through Time**, part of their new Adult Learning Editions. The programme airs on **Channel 57** (Ch. 27 on CF Cable, Ch. 14 on Videotron).
- 6:00pm      **CKUT** presents “**Literature Montreal**,” with host **Richard Weintrager** speaking with literary figures from Montreal and across Canada. The programme airs on **CKUT 90.3FM**.

## FOR CHILDREN

### **Activities at the Westmount Library**

\* Temporary location: Victoria Hall, 4626 Sherbrooke (until October 1995)

(corner Arlington and Sherbrooke, across from the Westmount YMCA)

Tel: 989-5229

\*all activities are free of charge, and membership to the Westmount Library is not necessary.

#### Storyhours

Each **Wednesday, preschoolers** are invited to drop in for stories, film strips and fun. The 20 minute sessions take place in **English for 2-3 year olds** at 10:30am and 3:00pm, and for **4-6 year olds** at 10:50am and 3:20pm. Sessions in **French** for **3-6 year olds** are held at 11:10am and 3:40pm. All sessions are free of charge. No registration is required, and everyone is welcome.

Starting Tuesday, September 20

#### 4:00 Club

Children from **6-9 years** of age are welcome to join the club on **Tuesday** afternoons from 4:00-5:00pm for a programme of story-based arts and crafts. Each week, participants draw ideas and inspiration from children's literature to create their own art projects. The sessions are free of charge. Attendance is limited to 12 children per session, so please call ahead on the morning of the session you wish to attend and a spot will be reserved for you. The phone number is 989-5229.

Starting Thursday, September 22

#### Storymakers Club

Aspiring authors from **9-12 years** of age are invited to join the club on **Thursday** from 4:00-5:00pm. The children create their

## I N D E X

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own stories, plays, poems and illustrations while building on themes and ideas from some of the best new children's books. Sessions, which are held in English, require no registration and are free of charge.

### **Activities at the Reginald J.P. Dawson Library**

1967 Graham Blvd, Town of Mount Royal

Tel: 734-2973

\*children must be registered members of the library to participate in all activities

Tuesday, September 6 Registration begins at the children's library circulation desk for the **preschool storytime programme** for children from **ages 2-5**. While books form the basis of the preschool programme, other activities such as film and puppetry complement the programme. The programme will run from **September 13 to December 8**.

Every Tuesday

10:30 to 10:50am

Storytime in **English** for **2 year olds**.

Every Wednesday

2:30 to 3:00pm

Storytime in **English** for **3-5 year olds**.

Every Wednesday

2:00 to 2:30pm

Storytime in **French** for **3-5 year olds**.

Every Thursday

10:30 to 10:50am

Storytime in **French** for **2 year olds**.

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### **Activities at the Pierrefonds/ Dollard-Des-Ormeaux Intermunicipal Library**

Pierrefonds: 13555 Pierrefond Blvd. (corner Richmond), tel: 620-4181

D.D.O.: 12001 De Salaberry Blvd. (behind the Civic Center), tel: 684-1496

\*all activities are free of charge, but children must be residents of D.D.O. or Pierrefonds. Non-residents can pay a fee to join the library.

Fall '94 Story Hour      Story Hour is for **ages 3-5** and begins on **September 19**.

Compulsory registration is on **Sunday, September 11 at 10:00am** for all **Dollard** groups and on **Sunday, September 18 at 10:00am** for all **Pierrefonds** groups.

Saturday, September 17

2:30pm      **Puppetunes** presented by **Sandy and Roni**, is a musical puppet fantasy for **4 to 7 year olds**. Entrance passes are mandatory and will be available on Saturday, September 3. The show takes place at the **Dollard** branch.

### RADIO & TELEVISION FOR CHILDREN

Sunday, September 11

8:30am      **WCFE** presents ***The Magic Schoolbus***, hosted by **Lily Tomlin**. This new series for kids, based on the popular children's books of the same name, will run every Sunday morning on **Channel 57** (Ch. 27 on CF Cable, Ch. 14 on Videotron).

AEAQ, FEWQ  
& QSPEQL  
invite you to join  
them at an  
**OPEN  
HOUSE**

at their new offices  
in the Atwater Library

date: Wednesday, September 21

time: 6:00pm – 8:00pm

location: Atwater Library,

1200 Atwater, second floor

for information: 934-2485

# SEPTEMBER

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11 8:30am <i>The Magic Schoolbus</i> starts on WCFE, p.24 3:00pm <i>Writers &amp; Co.</i> on CBC 940AM, p.17	12 12:30pm <i>Malone</i> on WCFE, p.17 1:30pm <i>Culturama</i> at the Museum of Fine Arts, p.5 8:00pm <i>Literary Reading</i> at John Alexander, p. 5  10:15pm <i>Between the Covers</i> on CBC 940AM, p.15	13 5:30pm <i>Julie Bruck</i> at Dawson, p.5 7:00pm <i>Stan Asher</i> on CKUT, p.17 7:15pm <i>Book Club</i> at DDO library, p.10 8:00pm <i>Moveable Feast</i> at Bistro 4, p.6  10:15pm <i>Between the Covers</i> on CBC 940AM, p.15	14 8:00pm <i>Seasons of</i>
18 8:30am <i>The Magic Schoolbus</i> on WCFE, p.24 10:00am <i>Books &amp; Breakfast</i> at the Ritz, p.6 3:00pm <i>Writers &amp; Co.</i> on CBC 940AM, p.19	19 12:30pm <i>Malone</i> on WCFE, p.19 8:00pm <i>Literary Reading</i> at John Alexander, p. 7 9:00pm <i>Urban Wanderers</i> at Bistro 4, p.7 9:45pm <i>Book Banter</i> on CJAD, p.19  10:15pm <i>Between the Covers</i> on CBC 940AM, p.15	20 7:00pm <i>Stan Asher</i> on CKUT, p.20  10:15pm <i>Between the Covers</i> on CBC 940AM, p.15	21 1:00pm <i>Book Clu</i> , p.10 6:00pm <i>AEAQ, F</i> open hou, p.11 8:00pm <i>MTL Bo</i> , p.10  10:15pm <i>Between t</i> 940AM, p.1
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## Going underwater:

### James Boothroyd



Denise Roig

In spite of the voice inside his head which still sometimes says, "This is a frivolous, disastrous way to spend your life!", James Boothroyd is writing these days.

He's writing a lot, in fact. After years of juggling full-time writing jobs — assistant editor for *McGill News*, staff reporter for a weekly police magazine in England ("read by all the bobbies!"), he's finally getting down to the writing that matters most: his own.

While Boothroyd enjoys journalism — "You get to stick your nose in all kinds of things" — he says "you're always painfully aware of what you're leaving out. In fiction, you decide what the story is. It's often more than what you know."

Boothroyd knows what interests him: "how people live with their histories and how they break free of them." A small piece of Boothroyd's own history appears in "Bull Swimmer," a story he describes as "basically a Gestalt in a restaurant."

While living in North London — Boothroyd studied Mexican history at Cambridge, journalism at the City University of London — he swam at the Highbury baths. "I've always wanted to write about swimming pools," he grins. Especially English public pools where "old men do handstands in the shallow end and kids swim across the lanes and they play loud pop radio. When my ear would come out of the water as I'd be doing the breast stroke or front crawl, I'd hear New York rappers."

He finds that "writing is a bit like going underwater. You're aware of yourself, your breathing. You're in this lovely cocoon space. You can step right out of your life when you jump in a pool." ●

—Denise Roig

# Bull Swimmer

by James Boothroyd

I followed Piers into the Everest Tandoori. It was better that way, because I was trembling and he'd made the reservation. I had not been in a restaurant in five years, but this one looked familiar enough. It was long and narrow, like the London curry houses I remembered, with two rows of tables (potted candles, starched white linen), an aisle up the middle and at the back a small bar where two Asian men in black bow ties were polishing glasses. Just in from the cold traffic of the Holloway Road, I noticed the warm twang of a sitar and saw — thank God! — that there was only one other table of diners: a man and a woman near the back. As Amal led us to our table, I'm sure I saw her wipe his wet face with a chapati.

This reassured me, because it seemed to confirm what Piers had said: that the Everest knew our needs. My need was to overcome a fear of eating out, or more specifically, choosing from a menu. It was one of the things I'd been working on since Jo left me four years ago, and I began seeing Piers at the Wellperson. We'd prepared for this dinner for several months, so I didn't want to blow it.

"We'll keep all four chairs," Piers told Amal, as we took our seats. I sat with my back to a wall of etched mirror tiles, Piers opposite, facing me.

I gave him the thirty pounds and we began.

"So-o-o, what's been happening with you?" Piers asked. I checked nobody was within earshot.

"Well, it's been a fine two weeks, the last two weeks," I stammered. "I've felt...fine."

Piers said nothing, just leaned back in his chair and nodded his head,

slowly.

"Fine," I repeated.

"Can you be more specific, Mark?"

"Course I can be more specific." My mouth was dry, I knew I'd have to plunge.

"Here goes: first of all, I've felt more together, more grounded, or rather I should say less ground-ed and more water-red. Red is now a huge colour for me; I go-go for red."

Piers raised his hand for a waiter, then looked back at me.

"You said water-red."

"Yeah, water-red," I whispered. The waiter was coming our way.

"While we decide, I'll have a pint of Double Diamond and a plate of papadums," Piers said.

The waiter backed away, as if he was serving some Mogul.

"I bought a pass for the local swimming baths," I continued. "Cost seven quid but it was worth every penny."

"You feel drawn to water?"

"Yeah, the dryness. The office air is so dry, it's getting to me and I have been dying to immerse myself in water. Feel surrounded by the stuff. So I bought this swimming pass and I feel I'm taking my life by the horns. Swimming on horns: sort of horn-swimming."

For perhaps a minute, Piers said nothing. He just watched me like a life-guard.

Then I added: "A bull has possessed me."

"A bull."

"When I do lengths, other swimmers clear out of my way because they're afraid to be gored."

Another long pause.

"Gored," Piers replied, at last.

"Gored," I said, *sotto voce*, as the waiter arrived with the mug of beer and plate of pappadums. He set the plate down behind the beer, but I could see those bumpy rounds of desert, flecked with black pepper and glistening with oil. I heard them crack in Piers' fingers. And I smelt their wait-and-see spices — turmeric, cloves, crushed cumin and coriander — which made me think of when I was a boy with my cheek against my mother's warm oven mitt.

"Are we having curry for dinner?" I would ask.

"Wait and see," she would always say.

"But I'm *so* hungry," I would reply, as if knowing what was to come would somehow fill the hollow in my stomach.

But my mother never answered. She was steadfast, an opening bat: nothing got through her pads. Put her in for England and she'd soon soften up the West Indian fast bowlers: Wesley Hall, Andy Roberts, even big black Joe Garner.

Piers spoke in a voice soft as honey: "Gored."

"Yeah, I'm a bull in the Highbury baths. My bathing cap is black like my trunks, so people think I'm a toro, and clear out of my way. No longer do geezers do handstands in the shallow end when I'm charging; couples disentwine in my path. I'm no longer just Mark Latchworth, single man, Hackney housing officer: now I'm a bull-swimmer."

"Good, Mark," Piers said, as he put down his pint. "I hear that you're happy with your new identity — your bull-

swimmer. I hear that you feel safe in the blue pool. You feel you're asserting yourself — no longer letting others cross your lane with impunity."

"I'm growing more like a bull and I like that."

Piers nodded as he swept pappadum crumbs off his jumper. I'd never seen this one before — a rich, inky blue weave with veins of amber, sea green and plush red. It looked new and expensive: unlike the mustard-and-porridge woolens my mother used to buy me for Christmas (woolens that only weeks earlier I had finally stuffed in a plastic sack and left outside the local Oxfam).

Another couple entered the Everest, followed by a draught of cold air, the rumble-clank of a northbound lorry. I didn't look at them because now Piers was hoovering. His eyes sucked on mine the way they sucked during our sessions at the Wellperson and I had that familiar sensation of words being hoovered out my eyes — words from the remotest ganglia of my brain. The words of a ditty:

"I can whistle/ I can sing/ I can do most anything."

"Can you dine out?" Piers had asked at our last session.

"I don't feel ready."

"When will you?"

"Never?"  
"I don't believe that."

"You don't trust me?"

"No, I trust you, Mark," he said as he glanced at the alarm clock on his mantelpiece.

When my hour is up, his clock goes "Peep-Peep Peep-Peep." And that's it. He smiles, takes my thirty quid and says in his honey voice, "Take care, Mark, see you in a fortnight." And off I go, back to

the housing office, or home to 64 Pyrland Road.

Ever since Jo left I've lived in this shared house in Stoke Newington. There are six of us – Ginny, Wilf and Marci who are on the dole; George the nurse, Clare the articling solicitor, and me, Mark, the Hackneyed housing officer. We have a kitchen on the ground floor where I prepare my meals: all of them. None of my housemates know I'm a restaurantphobe; instead, they believe what I told them – that I'm saving for a big trip to the Indian subcontinent.

It's become something of a joke. Like the previous Friday, when I was scrubbing carrots, and Wilf came bounding downstairs.

"Join us for a kebab, Mark? Clare's treatin' us –"

"Like fuck, I am!" I heard Claire call out.

Wilf winks.

I shake my head.

"Saving for that ashram?" Wilf asks.

Wilf likes a little repartee – you need that when you're unemployed – but if he only knew how freaked out I get when I go into a restaurant, he wouldn't tease me with invitations:

"Join us at the chippie, Mark?"

"Headin' to the Turkish – wanna' come along?"

"Member that caf in Dalston that does jellied eel?"

Piers didn't bring his clock to the Everest – I was glad of that – but he did set specific terms and conditions for our night out: I was to pay for one hour and

the meal. He said this was always the arrangement when he worked at the Everest, and added that research shows that clients who pay for their therapy heal faster.

I was wondering if that research indicated any direct relation between the amount you pay and the amount you heal, when – God help me! – I saw Amal coming down the aisle with two large red menus.

"Gentlemen," he said, handing Piers the menus.

"Anything else from the bar?"

"No thank you," said Piers, who was only half way through his beer. "We'll need a few more minutes, Amal, but in the meantime I will take a small plate of steamed prawns – you know the ones I like."

I looked at the menus, felt my heart fibrillate.

Could I do it? Could I choose?

Piers' voice was soothing:

"Now remember, Mark – just as we practised – breathe deeply, count down from ten and feel the tension flow out of your neck, your shoulders, your back, right down through your legs and into the floor, the sewer, the sea. Feel all that sewage go out of your body and into the sea.

"The water treatment plant?"

"Yes, through the water treatment plant, then into the sea."

I tried to imagine I was in the soft chair with the black lacquered arms in Piers' room at the Wellperson. I felt the sewage dripping out my toes as my heartbeat slowed and my whole body relaxed. The dinner decision was now at hand, but I felt ready.

His eyes sucked on mine  
the way they sucked during  
our sessions at the Wellperson  
and I had that familiar sensa-  
tion of words being hoovered  
out my eyes...

"Ready?" he asked.

"Ready."

"Good," he said, handing me the red menu. "When it feels right, read it carefully and remember to breathe."

I took a deep breath and opened the menu. Inside were plastic-coated pages filled with literally hundreds of items, each one numbered and named under bold headings: Starters, Chicken Dishes, Meat Dishes, House Specialties, Tandoori Specialties, Prawn Dishes, King Prawn Dishes, Biryani Dishes, Thali Dishes, Vegetable Dishes, Rice and Roti, Desserts, Beverages.

Choosing has never been my forte, so I avoid decisions. I used to think my weakness was just a symptom of tolerance. You know, I'd stare at a menu for maybe fifteen minutes or half-an-hour, because I was convinced that I owed each item careful consideration. It used to drive Jo crazy, because she could glance at the list and pick a meal without the slightest remorse — chicken biryani, dahl, raeta, whatever. But as she glowered at me, I would sink deeper and deeper in my deliberations:

"Sag aloo is full of spinach, iron — good for one's health," I would say to myself. "It's got yoghurt which is better for you than thick cream or milk. But Bombay Duck is more exotic, something not everybody orders. Funny how they call it duck when it's really dried fish with a foul smell: like smoke mixed with that putrefied fish fertilizer Jo sprinkles on her roses."

"Mark, I'm famished!" Jo said, the last time we went to a restaurant.

ARCMTE "Won't be long," I replied, apolo-

getically. But it was five years, because by the time I'd considered the ten or fifteen entrees, I was in a real muddle and Jo was fit to be tied. When she walked out, a few minutes later, I lost the nerve to order.

My dinner at the Everest was going to be different.

I scanned that long list, breathed deeply and let my body decide.

"Well?" Piers said as he peeled a prawn.

"I'm not sure."

"That's all right: do you have your shortlist yet?"

"Yeah," I replied. "Part of me wants the chicken tikka, but another voice is shrieking for the mulligatawny soup."

"Mmmmmmm."

My foot pawed the carpet beneath the table.

"Feelin' pretty shakey," I said.

"That's all right, Mark. We can stop anytime you choose, because *you're* in control."

"Yeah, *I'm* in control."

"So, why don't we listen to those voices?" I looked around the restaurant. A

party of four had arrived and taken a table by the window at the front of the restaurant. I figured that they were within earshot, but they seemed to be absorbed in some sort of group exercise, drawing with wax crayons.

"Right," I said.

Piers wiped his prawn fingers on his napkin. Then he stood to pull out the two spare chairs, turning them inwards to face him.

"Which is which?" he said, returning to his chair.

In the one on the left, I saw red chicken.

"Tikka's there," I said, pointing to the chair.

"Good. When you're ready, sit in it." I stood up, shook the tension from my shoulders and moved to the tikka chair.

"Hot, Jesus, hot!" I cried. "It's fuckin' fizzlin' under me. Fizzle fizzle bull's pizzle. God, it's smokin' too! I felt my bronchial tubes contract.

"Smoka-smoka tikka, smoka-tikka smoka-tikka," I rasped.

"Breathe, Mark," I heard Piers say. I inhaled deeply and felt the spices — cayenne, paprika — burn the lining of my lungs.

"It's red hot in here!"

"Red hot?"

"Yeah this chicken's red, it's not a chicken, it's bull-chicken. No, it's a bull. I'm a bull with bull's balls. Hot red bull's balls, swingin' between my thighs — heavy as lead."

"Heavy balls?" Piers' voice sounded far away.

"Yeah, heavy and hot like shot. Lead shot, just poured. They're swayin, they're weighin' me down."

"Move!"

I tried to move but I couldn't: my balls were stuck in the sand. I saw the matador's black trouser leg, his red satin cape. He was coming towards me, his sword drawn. I pawed the hot sand, then lunged.

"Charge!" I bullhorned.

"Now, Amal!" someone cried from somewhere — high in the stands? — then everything was either red or black as I tossed my sharp horns: upwards, then, down and in. And again! Into his thigh, his fat femoral artery.

The next thing I remember were hands on my neck, my shoulders. Then a voice — closer now.

"Stop, Mark!"

"Mark! It's me, Piers. Cool it!"

Hands rubbed my shoulders as I recognized a table leg, a red cushion disappearing down the aisle. gingerly, I felt the back of my neck. My fingers came away dry: there was no blood, no blade, no gaping wound.

I stood up. We were still in the Everest. The other diners weren't looking my way; I followed Piers' eyes around the table to the other chair.

"It's cooler here," I said, once I'd settled.

"Good."

"Soupy too — soupy cool."

"Mmmmm."

I felt the seat surround me like cool soup. Green peas and golden lentils filled my lap, and soon I was wading, milling about in that mill-mulligatawny.

I thrashed my feet, my hands, but only sunk deeper. I reached out for a pea but it slipped from my grasp. The soup was up to my chin when I heard Piers call out.

"How's the soup, Mark?"

"Deep!" I replied.

"You're in it?"

"Up to my neck."

"How's it feel?" Piers sounded as if he had food in his mouth.

"Dangerous!" was my last word before I went under. I thrashed and kicked but only sunk deeper and the soup dark-

ened from gold to brown to black. Then, as my lungs ached for air and I was no longer able to tell which way was up, my body did something on its own. Without a spark of thought, without a prod from Piers, I did a frog kick. Just one kick, at first, like the frogs that hang, almost motionless, beneath the surface of still ponds. Then another kick, and another, and before I knew it I was doing the breast stroke, and rising.

The soup went from black-brown-gold then I burst the surface, gasping for air. I gasped until the air calmed me and I realized that I could stay on the surface by treading lentil. I looked around. Far in the distance, perhaps a mile away, I made out what looked like a high white wall: the side of the bowl. I struck out in that direction, swimming front crawl. Face down in the soup, it was difficult to see and I often bumped into peas, but it wasn't long before I found my rhythm, and began to hear words.

"Mark," I heard as I turned my head to breathe. I swam on.

A few strokes later, I heard "Okay?"

Then "Ear."

My hand struck a pea, which I rolled beneath my body so it buoyed me up.

"Mark, can you swim?" I heard someone say. It was Piers.

"Course I can swim," I shouted. "I have a pass for the Highbury baths."

"Are you all right?"

"Yeah, I've got on my black trunks and bathing cap: I'm bull-swimming."

"Bull-swimming?"

"Yeah, no problem."

"You're safe now."

"I'm not gonna drown," I replied, and slid off the pea back into the soup. As I swam on I mouthed those words, "not gonna drown / not gonna drown," all the way until my fingers touched china.

Hands reached under my arms, pulled me from the soup, over the edge of

the bowl and into a chair. I wiped my face with a napkin and was surprised when it came away dry. I found that my ears were clean, too: not a trace of a lentil or pea.

I was still in the mulligatawny chair facing Piers. He dropped the last of the prawn shells on his plate and began to clean his teeth with his tongue.

"Welcome back," he said. Behind him stood Amal — pen poised over notepad — the waiter, barman, chef and all the other diners: all smiles.

I stood up, pushed the chair back under the table and returned to my original seat.

"When you're ready," Piers said in his softest voice. "I want you to order *our* dinner."

He leaned forward and whispered, "I'll have number fifty eight: the Special Lamb Korma."

I looked down the menu to 58, which was under House Specialties. It read:

58. Special Lamb Korma.....16.50.

I skimmed the list to find something, anything that cost more. Nothing did. Piers had chosen the dearest dish at the Everest.

"We'll have a Special Lamb Korma," I said to Amal. "And a mulligatawny soup, thank you."

Getting up, I added:

"And the bill, Amal. Piers would like the bill."

"God is great!" Amal cried.

The crowd then parted and followed me, cheering, out of the Everest and into the Holloway Road. ●

## An elephant ride: Cynthia Sugars

*Besides the discovery of a new culture and mythology, your travels through India seem to have led you to a number of insights about yourself. I was wondering if you could talk about the acculturated pressures that produced that sort of inward thinking.*

You're right, India did initiate a process of inward looking, and I'm glad that came out in the poetry. But what I was trying to do in the poems was subvert the notion of the travel experience as a voyage of self-discovery. The last poem, for example, "Dreaming in Colours" places the traveller in a position of beginning again, or of rethinking the whole experience again. What you come up with, in other words, is an exploration of experience that never really arrives at a definite conclusion. And what I needed was some way of uniting a series of poems that would chart that very process of psychic uncertainty. You mentioned acculturated pressures, and I guess that's where the elephants come in.

One of the things that really struck me in India was the proliferation of elephants: in all the signs and advertisements, even in real life, you actually see elephants. And I guess what I was struck by was the contradiction that there is in the idea of an elephant. There's this hugeness and power and danger about it, what I tried to capture in "Mysore Lights". But there's also something completely in opposition to that, a sort of calmness that goes alongside the huge size of it. In "Evocations" I wanted to give a sense of that tension, of this huge destructive creature, but on the other hand slow and plodding with something really gentle about it.

There's also a Hindu god, Ganesha, who's supposed to be half-elephant and half-human, and there are all sorts of stories surrounding how he got an elephant's head. In one story, his father chopped off the child's head and then replaced it with an elephant's to atone for what he had done. Later on when I found out that this god, Ganesha, is also the god of wisdom and poetry, I decided to take the story of the elephant god and use it as an analogy to the experience I had had in India. The beheading of the god and the rebirth of the god in a different form seemed like a concrete way of reimagining the process of replacing the conventional travel experience with something more exciting and ambiguous. ☺



Jean Sugars

## Spirit of the Pachyderms

To begin  
you must begin  
with an elephant

Invoke Ganesha  
mammoth head affixed  
atop a trunk of man

Hindu god of travels  
and sound poetic voice  
A pachydermal saint

remembered for his  
rippled eyes and single  
tusk dismembered

He begins as a boy  
paddling liquid fingers  
in the river Ganges

doomed from the start  
he lost his head  
acquired a bestial replacement

One story tells  
of curses evil eyes  
where jealousy demanded

homely retribution  
though deformity at last  
remained an element of taste

Another has his mother  
smoothly bathing  
humming to the child

who bars his father's way  
Shiva draws his sword  
seething with cobras

creates catastrophe  
whisks off Ganesha's head  
then atones through substitution

Lucky thing that elephant  
stand-in slept nearby  
luxuriating

*let that rubber river trickle  
drizzle down your back  
it sings*

stalked even then by  
languid trophy hunters  
deft truncators who

with slice and silver transfer  
match one beheading for another  
leave a slightly larger corpse

to grace the river's edge  
I learn this only later  
deep inside a sandstone fort

Old Delhi  
medal of St. Christopher  
pinned roughly in my jeans

I must retrace my footing  
pocket a more corpulent god  
or one at least that's

thicker skinned  
feel and learn again  
how I might begin

## Evocations

The closest you can get  
to the snow-crunching sound  
of packed Montreal snow  
soft-shoed by salted boot leather  
is to sit atop a lumbering Indian elephant  
let it wander through the underbrush  
uproot a yellowed sapling or two  
feel it crush these head-on  
stuff them horizontally to mouth  
then listen to the spongy feet so slow  
hear the saddle mattress creak  
close your eyes and dream yourself  
an emperor or better yet  
an Inuit hunter leaving  
mukluk tracks in desert ice

## Mysore Lights

We share whispers  
through mosquito netting  
the hum and rumble  
from a distant mosque  
embracing us at six am  
*this is the darkest room I've ever  
been in,* she says  
so we talk about illuminations  
each Sunday night the palace  
shril with bulbs  
not one burnt out  
the orchestra kabooms and  
peanut vendors brightly cry  
*for paises*  
smiles lit by flame  
like the moon in India  
a grinning Buddha  
a bull's horns

These gates where made for elephants  
thundering rumours  
stabbed just beyond the blaze  
I want to see one cast aglow  
groping for peanuts  
want to see it reach down  
and lift a beaming peanut vendor  
tossing shells against the sky

## Dreaming in Colours

If he could paint this scene  
*Krishna tinted blue with demon's blood*  
*in tight embrace with silver*  
*daughter of a watermelon farmer*  
if he could stain this swatch of silk  
with just one eyelash of a camel  
if he can dream in miniatures  
think fine-line fantasies  
why can't I see largely  
dreaming in colours  
believe myself a giant  
plodding Indian elephant  
each eyelash a wincing whip  
each step a tectonic lurch  
then could I traverse a world  
a land immense as India  
like an elephant's hide  
sufficiently large and rippled  
to enfold all lotus blooms  
and false beginnings?

## Habits of discovery: Bruce Taylor



*There's a rhythm of presence in "The Facts," a cadence that seems to pace the rate at which the poem doles out its images, its lines, even its sounds. I was wondering how conscious you usually are of these rhythms or cadences when you're crafting your poems, or are they useful to you only in an intuitive way?*

A large part of it is purely intuitive — figuring out which cadences work and which don't, for example. Of course, your intuitions will change from day to day. A line might sound right at the moment, but by suppertime it will seem flabby and bloated — so you have to return to the thing repeatedly, letting your intuitions contradict one another. You create this turbulence of intuitions — then, if you are lucky, something crafty and cunning rises to the surface, and that is your poem. Any writer will have times when every accident creates something beautiful and the page seems to write itself. But if you depend too much on your reflexes the work can become mechanical. Lately I've been revising a lot, and one of the reasons for that is that I want a wider vocabulary of cadences. Cadence and stress are to the poet what line and gesture are to the visual artist. Anyone who draws or paints will have a characteristic line, a line that is entirely idiosyncratic. If you want to improve your work, you might try to get beyond your own habits of expression and learn to make lines you couldn't make before. For me, revision is not about distillation or self-censorship but amplification and discovery. It offers a way of escaping from habits of style. ●

ARCMTL

— Carmine Starnino

## The Facts

That fall I crossed over in the back of an open truck  
sharing a tarpaulin with a spotted dog, part dingo,  
who chewed on the same shoe all the way there.  
I sat for ten hours with my back in a tire,  
my feet in another tire,  
and my head on a box full of gears  
while the truck gorged on hundreds of miles  
of crumpled up scenery, tracing the phone wires to their source,  
counting out miles by the poles  
and the road glided up and down like a wave  
in a skipping rope through a child's diorama  
of tall silos, white steeples  
and luxurious slopes polkadotted with cows.

The driver was playing Lou Reed on ten-inch speakers.  
I could see a big slice of his face in the side mirror,  
mouthing the words. Then there was a long stretch  
of nothing, no houses by the road, just mailboxes  
with names like Schmidt and McNab  
and the driveways so long you could not see  
a house at the end. Dogs  
taunted us from the ditch,  
and we hit some unsavoury roads. The scenery  
worsened, the bottlerack spruce stuck right out  
like enormous dead weeds. Slovenly black-faced sheep  
connived under a tin lean-to. The cattle were thin,  
and the driver began swerving to avoid  
things that were not there, and in spite of all that  
we made very good time. We stopped once  
to let the hyena, or dog, or whatever that was,  
run wild in a dry creekbed,  
and it came back in an hour and a half  
dragging a tree.

From there on it was all downhill, the highway flat and slanted  
with skid marks arcing into the ditch.

The driver cut the engine and we coasted for hours  
with the smell of a forest fire in the air; then we drove  
right through the fire, which nobody seemed to be fighting.  
The wind was hot and dry, the fire  
floated quietly in the branches.

The dog looked at me sideways out of his Egyptian eyes,  
the hair behind his ears ruffling in the hot wind.

At last we arrived at the sea. We pushed the truck down a boat launch  
into the surf and the engine shattered like crystal,  
seawater foaming around it as it sank, the tape-deck blaring.  
The driver took off his pants and swung then around his head,  
shouting Hoo Eee Ha, then he looked for the hugest rock he could lift  
and hurled it into the ocean, bloosh, then another one,  
bloosh. I skipped shells on the waves,  
the sea chipped them up into a dazzle of sunlight, the dog  
ran loose on the beach pulling hundreds of yards  
of fish nets and kelp. Boats rose and fell in the bay  
like music scaling the rungs of the staff  
as the day petered out. That night we made fires on the beach  
and swilled cans of pastel-coloured paint  
under a frosty-eyed moon.

The next morning, we watched islands forming offshore.  
It seems the planet was molten inside and liquefied rock  
gushed out of spluttering cracks in the bay.

Tumours of granite bulged up  
under shuddering columns of steam, and clouds  
goggled over the brim of the sky  
like fantastically big shrunken  
heads dragging hail over the hump of the world as the rain  
collapsed back  
in the sea, hissing and clattering.

The city was just off the map but not hard to find.  
It turned out to be  
several towns I'd grown up in  
with the street-names confused. I got lost right away  
turning left unto Meadowdale, right onto Riverview,  
two blocks down Stoneybrook where it meets Mount Pleasant.  
Then I came to Pleasantbrook, Meadowview, Stonemount,  
Brookstone and Riverdale, and found myself at a four way stop  
near a memorial in mauve granite  
reading a long list of names and lifespans,  
and they all seemed to be people I knew.  
And a phone booth was there.  
I found my own name five times in the book  
at five different addresses, all of them somehow familiar:  
Sherwood, Arcadia, Avalon, Canaan, and Grace.  
I could see myself living on Grace, but I rented a well-lit room  
where King meets Queen overlooking the bridge  
and I could see headlights coming on in the grey morning  
and taillight riding home in the dark,  
and I would listen to the four o'clock traffic report, wondering  
if home might be over that bridge  
in the dark trees on the far side,  
a porchlight in flying snow.

I felt old all that winter  
watching powders drift on the ice.  
One by one walking corpses of snow  
stood up on the rock  
to be jabbed in the back by the wind,  
herded over the petrified river  
into the black trees on the far side.  
One vanished, another  
rose up behind,  
and I'd sit at the window all day,

my eyes shrunk to beebees  
my breath stuck fast to the glass,  
watching dead things stand up and vanish  
in a dimensionless white.

And all night too  
with the stars on till four thirty five,  
and the city burnt down to coals,  
some solitary jesus  
with his hands in his pants  
moralizing to a bank machine,  
the streetlamps untended,  
the neon neglected, stove elements  
left on in dark kitchens,  
and my candle spread out in a cold  
blob of wax on a plate,  
the wick like a mummified flame,  
my breath on the window  
and there in the yard by my room  
one stiff tree, an elm,  
with its roots in the town wiring  
pushing its scorched filaments  
into the circuitry of the dawn  
delaying the sunrise — a vile tree,  
knee deep in its own dead leaves,  
frazzled and upside down  
a mass of congealed lightning  
with the bone structure of a horrible dream,  
a thick trunk dividing dividing  
dividing in a frenzy of mathematics,  
 littler, skinnier, stingier,  
 fussing at the frayed hem of the sky,  
 consumed by its puny uniqueness  
like some cipher-crazed maniac

up till dawn counting threads in the drapes,  
knowing there's an answer in there,  
some number divisible by one and itself,  
some code to persuade him it all  
made no sense, that the wrong god  
was in charge.

I spent hours at the bus stop waiting for nothing,  
kicking a stone-hard plum with the toe of my boot,  
roadsalt on my eyelashes, the slit-eyed sun  
circling the world in freezing rain  
like a trapped fox circling the stake,  
and there was an immense crumminess all over, the sky  
was measly, the city was junk,  
the people were cruel. I could say we had all given up  
but there was no we, just I's, long subways full of them  
flowing into the rain-smudged factories at dawn,  
into the steam-windowed kitchens at noon,  
into the hydraulics of a revolving dreamworld  
after the day. Then after the day  
whole personalities were crushed  
in the gears of a massive delirium,  
the moon screwed into the hospital ceiling  
emptying light onto the blinkety blank foreheads,  
the eyes swivelling under the lids, the lips  
framing each others' names in the dark  
dreaming Hello Bruce, dreaming Hello to you too,  
dreaming What will he say to me next? Dreaming  
my surprise, dreaming his answer, dreaming the air  
that I flew through, the battery acid I breathed  
and a city that differed in trivial details  
from the one where I lived.

Then the sun would climb back on the roofs  
rekindle its tired fire, and the day would recur.  
I'd rise at five to read Dante in a donut shop, pining for  
the romance of a *real* hell, a hell that roared and stank,  
a hell of ingenious torments not this half-baked  
hades of sameness where the same morning came back every day,  
the same office windows blurry with rain,  
lights jittering on,  
the coffee maker pissing into a clean pot,  
the xerox machine warming up, the wastebaskets empty,  
the swivel chair right where it was — how I wished  
for a major league hell, but was plagued instead  
by one poor fiend with a face like a barbecued apple  
who shinnied up my elevator shaft each day  
to slide documents under the door for me to sign  
and return to sender, please, *without delay*,  
Congratulations **Bruce Taylor** , you will receive a fortune  
of *one million dollars*. Welcome to riches, **Bruce** ,  
this is the key to your Rolls,  
and sorry seductions like these, no threat  
to my soul if I have one, clip out and return  
this card to receive  
your valuable prize, and that kind of thing.

I found work as a laboratory animal  
for a bald man with pinecone sideburns. He tested poisons on me  
but I survived them all, he was amazed, we both were,  
then I quit that position and nailed a secure job  
at the Lady Byng Charity Domicile  
stirring vats of grey mush. Eventually I dropped that too  
and hammered sheet metal to a school wall;  
then I drove a blue van, and later I worked for the city  
painting white lines on the roads,  
and in the course of that spring  
I did every job for a day,  
so now I can tell you I've been every person in town  
I've done every work that was offered  
and lived every life. When I went  
I saw myself coming, the trolleys filled up with me  
coming and going, the newspaper kept me informed  
about all that I did, I looked up  
to the rainstreaked windows downtown and saw me  
looking down over streets full of me.  
A red bird flapped up to its nest, it was me,  
she laid me in branches and twine, when I hatched  
I asked to be fed, so she brought me  
a frantic six-legger and in a snap of the beak  
I was gone, mislaid somewhere in a forest of me,  
my slim branches clicking and groaning.  
I pushed the new leaves from my arms  
and they were also me, falling in millions.  
I bought books and the author was me  
talking to me about me, I was transfixed,  
or transported, I searched through the news  
clipping out pictures of me for my walls,  
and that's when I knew

that my goals lacked focus. I saved up for a truck  
found a good one that summer.

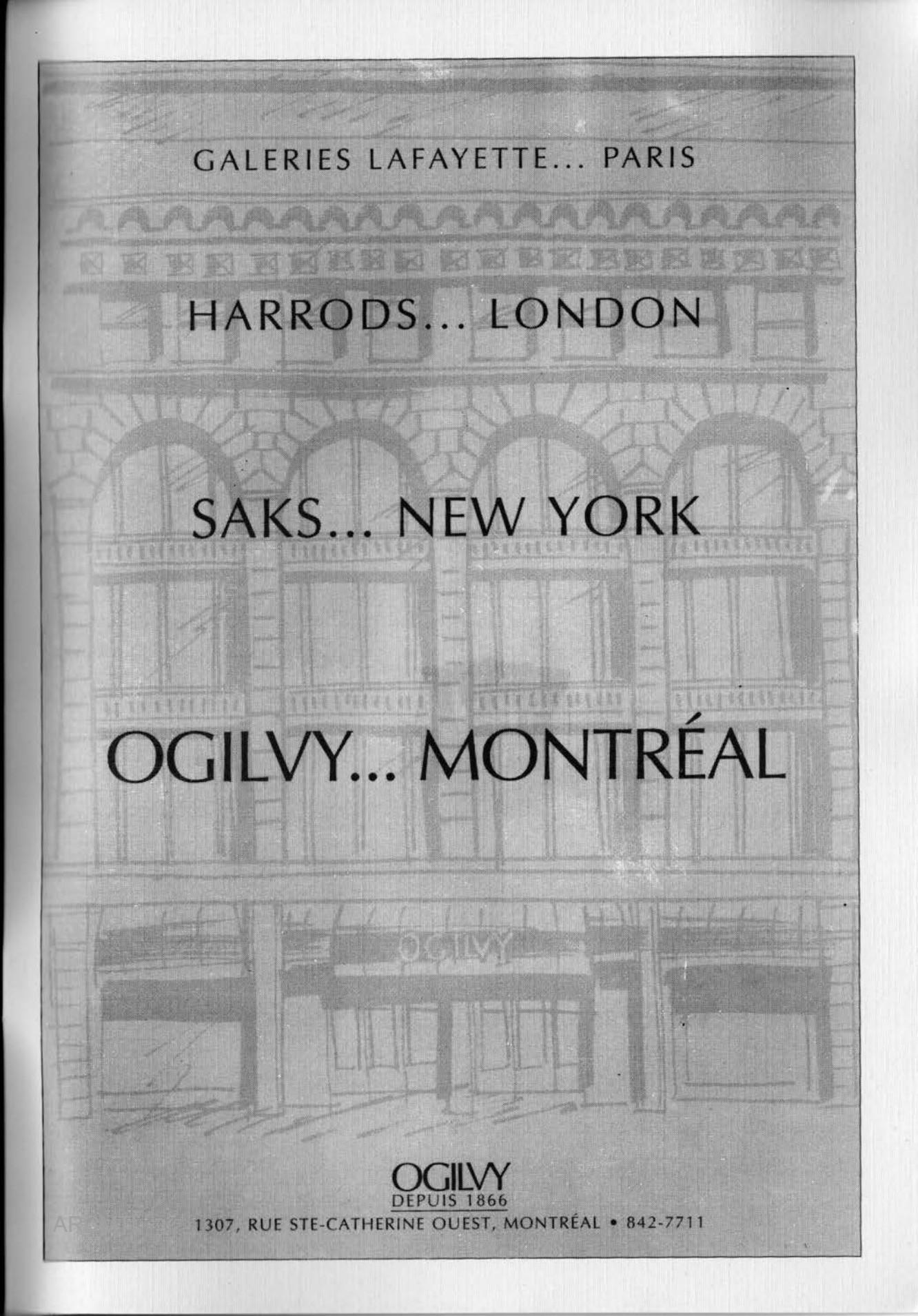
I picked out a sharp-faced dog, half jackal,  
lured him to me with a piece of red meat,  
tied him down to the greasy fifth wheel and left town.  
I stopped for a sad looking man at the Red Devil Luncheon  
kneedep in dandelions, dressed like a fool,  
holding a sign that said Hi, well Hi to you too,  
you can ride in the back, ignore the dog, he's been fed,  
and then I was off  
to ransack the landscape for spots  
I could never imagine,  
horizons I didn't design,  
to find somebody just as he is  
in a world that has always been there,  
a real world, a big world, a rock-hard world  
as wide as all that and made to endure, a well-known world  
with the power to pulverize  
theories beliefs and conjecture  
under the flat rough stones of the facts.

# the last page...

## The Naturalist

*by Michael Harris*

You don't call. Won't, I imagine. I've become a naturalist. One sparrow climbed up on another over 100 times this morning. I counted. Perhaps, like humans, birds forget what it's like until they do it again. In between mountings, the two of them sit apart, looking idly off at whatever interests birds, quite disconnected. I've made a few notes. When other males or females enter their territory there is immediately a lot of activity which humans perform too, in these instances. One major difference between birds and humans in the matter of mating, is that birds don't even think of counting. Neither do they seem to feel the hard falls that come from unrequited love. That is when we were different, I think, as I edge out tentatively onto the telephone line, settle into my feathers, and wait.



GALERIES LAFAYETTE... PARIS

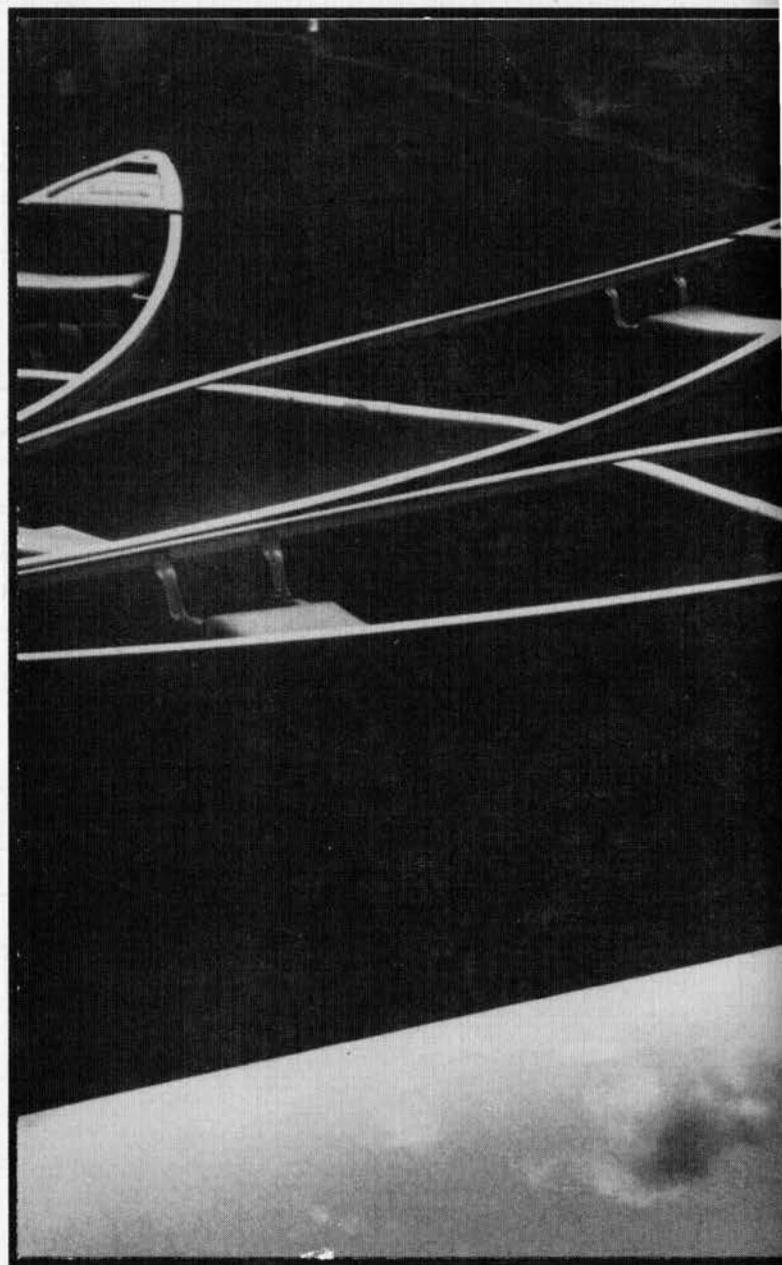
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